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A Radio Broadcast by
RICHARD M. NIXON

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A STRATEGY OF QUALITY: CONSERVATION IN THE SEVENTIES

This is a time when technological advances have given us material benefits beyond the dreams of all other nations and civilizations. And yet we are confronted with an important and perplexing problem.

Obviously we must make more use of our natural resources to maintain our high standard of living.

But the more inroads we make upon our land and water and air, the less we are able to enjoy life in America.

We need lumber to build our homes; but we also need untouched forests to refresh our spirit.

We need rivers for commerce and trade; but we also need clean rivers to fish in and sit by.

We need land for homes and for great industrial plants; but we also need land free from man's works, land on which a man can take a long walk, alone, away from the pressures of modern life.

We need the dynamic productivity of industry; but we also need fresh air to breathe.

We need the raw natural materials with which to create the products we desire; but we also need large areas of land in which a man can re-create himself, areas of true recreation.

Today, "natural resources" has a double meaning. It means not only those riches with which we have been so abundantly blessed for our economic and technological advantage, but also those same riches as they exist for our psychological and emotional and spiritual advantage.

We must conserve and use our natural resources because of the numerous things we can do with them.

We must also conserve and use them because of what they ^{can}/do for us.

We need a high standard of living, but we also need a high quality of life.

We need not only more uses for our natural resources, but also better uses.

We need a strategy of quality for the seventies to match the strategy of quantity of the past.

I was born and spent my early years in the Western United States and during my life I have travelled across this country many times. I have never ceased to be inspired by the variety and complexity of the American landscape.

But now man and his works are in places which only a few years ago were untouched by civilization, and now, as I fly across the great mountains and deserts, high above the green forests and winding rivers, new questions arise:

Can we have the highest standard of living in the world and still have a land worth living in?

Can we have technological progress and also have clean beaches and rivers, great stretches of natural beauty and places where a man can go to find the silence and privacy he is unable to find in our increasingly urbanized daily life?

Will future generations say of us that we were the richest nation and the ugliest land in all history?

Are we doomed by some inexorable thing called progress to give to our children a land devoid of beauty, empty of scenes of natural grandeur, filled with gadgets and gimmicks, but lost forever to the wonder and inspiration of nature?

These are the important questions. They deal not with one part of American life, but with life in America itself.

We are faced with nothing less than the task of preserving the American environment and at the same time preserving our high standard of living.

It would be one of history's cruelest ironies if the American people -- who have always been willing to fight and die for freedom -- should become slaves and victims of their own technological genius.

The battle for the quality of the American environment is a battle against neglect, mismanagement, poor planning and a piecemeal approach to problems of natural resources.

It is a battle which will have to be fought on every level of government, not on a catch-as-catch-can basis, but on a well-thought-out strategy of quality which enlists the aid of private industry and private citizens.

At the beginning of this century, Theodore Roosevelt called upon the American people to preserve the natural heritage. The time has come to renew that call, and to bring to programs of conservation the techniques of the seventies.

Modern technology and old-fashioned pride in America can and must combine to win the battle for our environment.

The technological know-how which will help to place man on the moon can be used to help him keep areas of untouched land, clean rivers and streams and pure air on earth.

I say we can have technological advances and natural beauty.

I say we can have fresh ideas in industry and fresh air in our cities.

I say we can have the greatest industrial might in the history of man and have places where man's works seem as distant as the stars.

How can we pursue this strategy of quality?

First, we must re-examine all existing federal programs with the aim of coordinating them. Under the Eisenhower Administration, such acts as the Federal Water Pollution Act channeled federal funds through a single source eliminating duplication and red tape. There is a grave need for such coordination and cooperation on every level of government, and especially between federal and state and local government.

Second, we must make better use of computer technology, especially in such vital areas as mineral resources. Computer technology can swiftly and efficiently help us to determine the nature and probable effect of existing balances of mineral resources in our own country and throughout the world. Such aid can also be used in helping officials to create multiple use of lands and explore the possibilities of ocean resources.

Third, we must create a national minerals and fuels policy if we are to maintain production needed for our economy and security. The strategy of quality looks upon the oil well and the mine as vital parts of the American economy and of American power. There is no contradiction between preserving the natural beauty of America and assisting the mineral industries which are the primary sources of American power. Economic incentives, including depletion allowances, to encourage the discovery and development of vital minerals and fuels must be continued.

Fourth, federal laws applicable to public lands and related resources should be brought up to date. These lands will be managed to ensure their multiple use as economic resources and recreation areas.

Fifth, although most of our nationally owned land is in the West, most of the population is in the East. We must work in cooperation with cities and states all over the country -- but especially in the industrialized East -- in acquiring and developing green space. The rugged grandeur of mountains a thousand miles away means nothing to a city child who is not able to get to them. Our cities must not be allowed to become concrete prisons. The creation of national parks and outdoor recreation areas near the large cities is as vital a part of the strategy of quality as the preservation of the great forests and rivers of the West.

Sixth, every effort must be made to purify our rivers and streams and air.

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Last Sunday in a paper dealing with the pollution of our cities, I outlined a program of anti-pollution measures. Although the paper dealt specifically with problems of our cities, the program is applicable in many parts to the entire problem of pollution. Without repeating the entire six-point proposal, I will mention two key points:

Regional and federal approaches to the problem must be perfected and expanded since air and water pollution spills over traditional political boundaries.

The federal government should be the example of the highest standards of pollution control and all federal facilities should eliminate pollution if we are to expect the rest of the nation to follow suit.

Seventh, water and soil conservation and development programs must be coordinated. At the present time, four Cabinet Departments are involved in water resources: Health, Education and Welfare; Interior, Defense and Agriculture. It often happens that different agencies proceed in contradictory programs concerning the same problem. We must improve water resource information, including an acceleration of River Basin Commission inventory studies.

Eighth, we must investigate the possibilities of desalination programs. A limited supply of water is already one of the pressing problems in the world and could become a severe problem in America. A breakthrough in desalination methods could make fresh water available to coastal and surrounding areas throughout the world. Atomic desalination offers an exciting possibility of greater output at much lower, perhaps even competitive prices. We must stop talking about the future of water preservation and development and start doing the research and studies which will bring the future to us.

Ninth, we must intensify the investigation of ocean resources. The ocean lies as close as the nearest beach, but in its mystery and promise, it is as

distant as the fabled lands of gold. We must redouble our efforts in developing oceanography and new methods of harvesting resources from the sea. Vast stores of minerals lie beneath the ocean floor waiting for the ingenuity and courage and determination of man to extract them. The seventies can be not only the decade when Americans reach for the stars but when we dive for the riches of the sea, not the traditional sunken treasures, but riches such as protein to feed the world.

Tenth, we must improve our forestry practices, including protection and improvement of watershed lands. National forests are as important for recreational purposes as for preservation of wildlife, watershed control and timber production. We must extend methods of fire control in forests by fire pre-suppression and control work. Public and private agencies must work together to reduce the hazards of fire, pestilence, and disease. Here, as in every area of conservation, coordination of effort is of utmost importance.

Eleventh, we must act to preserve and maintain our wildlife. Already 24 birds and 12 mammals native to the United States and Puerto Rico have become extinct. This is only the beginning: 30 to 40 birds and 35 mammals are currently threatened with extinction unless efforts are made to acquire and maintain sufficient habitats. The preservation of fish and wildlife will require research, more land for sanctuaries, restoration of clean waters, conservation of wetlands, better watershed management, and cooperation between federal, state and private institutions.

Twelfth, we must make our recreational areas the best in the world. A quarter of a billion people, more than the total population of the United States, visit National Parks and monuments annually. The average annual growth in visits to outdoor recreation areas has been ten percent a year.

We are now becoming more aware of the problem emphasized and rigorously attacked during the Eisenhower Administration -- overcrowding of our national parks. We have succeeded beyond success in attracting people to our parks. If we continue

the present rate of increase, we will soon face everywhere the crisis of overcrowded parks and recreational areas, which already exists in many places.

Again, a unified cooperative program is immediately needed if we are to save our outdoor recreation programs and develop new ones. A Recreation Coordination Act can provide integrated planning for recreation in all new federal resources programs.

Conservation cannot be successful unless there is an on-going commitment, based on sound conservation principles, by the various government and private agencies. A sudden reaction to some problem which has become dramatized by media or a book is not a conservation program; it is a reaction to a problem which, if proper conservation principles had been followed, would not have needed national publicity to bring it before the eyes of the government.

We cannot afford a policy of conservation which promises much but delivers little.

We cannot afford a policy of conservation which jumps from problem to problem eager to seize on the problem most recently publicized.

Our environment is too precious a gift to be forgotten except when disaster looms.

Our single goal in this field is the enhancement of the life of every American.

Americans, every one of us, must be able to look at all of America and say: This is my country. Not only its material power but its natural glory.

Not only the dynamic sound of its industries but the silence of its great forests.

Not only the march of technological progress, but a casual stroll along a beach at night.

Not only the material benefits of today, but the deeper, richer gifts I can leave my children, gifts of natural grandeur and the solitude which is so necessary for the great search to find one's self.

The boy sitting on the steps of a ghetto tenement deserves and needs a place where he can discover that the sky is larger than the little piece he is able to see through the buildings,

This is our country.

The next administration will do everything it can to keep it great and to keep it for those who come after us a land of majesty and inspiration, truly the most powerful and most beautiful country in the world.